PREFACE

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As I sit in my study here in the quiet hills of West Virginia, my eyes wander to the bookshelf and a light-blue volume with the faded words “Mountains and Man” printed on its cracked and weathered spine. The glossy book jacket, showing two men silhouetted against a Hindu Kush–Himalayan skyline, has long been lost. Opening the book and flipping through its contents, I find that nearly every other sentence is underlined, every other page dog-eared, and the margins are blackened with notes and observations in my microscopic scrawl. Two muddy dog tracks grace page 1 from Chapter 1, “What Is a Mountain?”—a memento from fieldwork conducted in the Annapurna region of Nepal in the early 1980s. The book has traveled with me throughout the Hindu Kush–Himalayas; Yulongxue Shan Mountains of China; East African Highlands and Virunga Volcanoes; Drakensberg Mountains of South Africa; South American Andes; North American Rockies, Cascades, Adirondacks, and Appalachians; Russian and Mongolian Altai Mountains; and European, Australian, and New Zealand Alps. I have read and reread each chapter on buses, jeeps, airplanes, horseback, and in remote basecamps. It has helped me to plan my high mountain research, conservation, and climate change work throughout the mountain world; to design student and senior scientist field expeditions; and to develop a range of mountain education curricula, teacher training, and field methods courses.

The text I refer to is, of course, Dr. Larry Price’s seminal book *Mountains and Man*, published in 1981, the first book devoted exclusively to undergraduate mountain education since Roderick Peattie’s classic work from 1936, *Mountain Geography*. Several years ago I was discussing the status of mountain geography education and available textbooks

with Don Friend during a teacher training workshop at The Mountain Institute’s Spruce Knob Mountain Center in West Virginia. We realized that more than 20 years had passed since Dr. Price’s innovative work, and that much had happened in the interim.

For example, dozens of new mountain organizations have been created, and new mountain-specific forums, publications, conferences, websites, nonprofits, partnerships, and development projects have been established. But while *Mountains and Man* still contained a wealth of solid information that had stood the test of time, no current undergraduate textbook on mountain geography was available. The solution? With his permission, we would revise and update Dr. Price’s book by recruiting first-rate mountain geographers from around the world to revise each chapter, to be edited by a second team of mountain academics and specialists, including Martin Price, myself, Don Friend, and Thomas Kohler. Second, we would add new chapters on topics not addressed in the original edition, such as one devoted exclusively to mountain people and another on sustainable mountain development. Dr. Price was contacted and graciously agreed to the proposal. A contract with the prestigious University of California Press in Berkeley was signed, and the result is the product before you: *Mountain Geography: Physical and Human Dimensions*.

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